

***** T O P S E C R E T *****S COPY

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O 180317Z DEC 73 ZYH ZFF-1/4
FM THE SITUATION ROOM TOHAK 121

TO AMEMBASSY LISBON

T O P S E C R E T/SENSITIVE EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY WH37675

CONTAINS CODEWORD

25X1

TOHAK 121

TO LARRY EAGLEBURGER FOR SECRETARY KISSINGER

TOP SECRET-SENSITIVE

CONTAINS CODEWORD

DECEMBER 18, 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARY KISSINGER

FROM: THE SITUATION ROOM

SUBJECT: MORNING REPORT

HIJACKING OF BOEING 737: LATEST PRESS INFORMATION ON THE HIJACKING INDICATES THAT THE TERRORISTS HAVE KILLED FOUR OF THE HOSTAGES ABOARD THE LUFTHANSA AIRCRAFT. THE PLO HAS DENIED ANY CONNECTION WITH TODAY'S EVENTS IN ROME AND ATHENS. THE AIRCRAFT REMAINS AT THE ATHENS AIRPORT, WHERE TWO PRISONERS HELD BY THE GREEK GOVERNMENT ARE REPORTEDLY BEING TAKEN. THE HIJACKERS HAVE DEMANDED THEIR RELEASE. AMBASSADOR TASCA HAS MADE A STRONG DEMARCHE TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY NOT TO GIVE IN TO THE DEMANDS. AT LEAST 21 PAN AM PASSENGERS REPORTEDLY BURNED TO DEATH IN THE EARLIER ATTACK IN ROME.

LE DUC THO ARRIVES IN PARIS: LE DUC THO ARRIVED IN PARIS TODAY. IN AN AIRPORT STATEMENT THO SAID THAT THE U.S. AND SAIGON OUGHT TO BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM AND FOR THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE CEASE-FIRE VIOLATIONS.

NORTH VIETNAM BEGINS USING DREDGE OUTSIDE HARBOR: PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN ON DECEMBER 3 SHOW A SUCTION-TYPE DREDGE WORKING IN HAI-PHONG'S OUTER BAR FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE APPROACHES TO THE HARBOR WERE CLEARED OF MINES LAST JUNE. SHIPS DRAWING UP TO 23 FEET OF WATER CAN NAVIGATE ACROSS THE OUTER BAR AND THE APPROACHES TO THE HARBOR AT HIGH TIDE. WHEN THE OUTER BAR AND MARITIME CANAL ARE DREDGED AN ADDITIONAL TWO FEET, 10,000-TON

*****WHSR COMMENT*****

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SHIPS WILL BE ABLE TO MOVE INTO HAIPHONG. TRUCK CONVOYS DIMINISH IN LAOTIAN PANHANDLE: THE SURGE OF TRUCK CONVOYS IN THE LAOTIAN PANHANDLE SEEMS TO HAVE DIMINISHED. RECENT LOW-ALTITUDE PHOTOGRAPHS OF ROUTE 99 SHOWED 71 SOUTHBOUND TRUCKS, MOST OF WHICH WERE COVERED, AND FIVE NORTHBOUND. THE NEXT DAY ONLY 11 LOADED TRUCKS WERE NOTED GOING SOUTH, AND 133 EMPTY ONES WERE HEADING NORTH. THE NUMBER SEEN EITHER DAY, HOWEVER, WAS WELL BELOW THE DECEMBER 4 HIGH OF 780 TRUCKS. THIS ACTIVITY SUGGESTS THAT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE HAVE EVIDENTLY ESTABLISHED THEIR DRY-SEASON SUPPLY ROUTINE USING LONG-HAUL SHUTTLING BY LARGE CONVOYS.

WASHINGTON STAR-NEWS: A PICTURE OF YOU WITH ABBA EBAN IN A HELICOPTER IS ON PAGE A-8.

PRESIDENT SADAT IS REPORTEDLY IN BED WITH BRONCHITIS. ANDREW BOROWIEC WRITES THAT YOUR TOUR OF THE MIDDLE EAST SHOWS THE LIMITED WEIGHT OF AMERICAN INFLUENCE IN THE ARAB WORLD. HE SAYS THE THREE-DAY DELAY OF THE GENEVA PEACE CONFERENCE DOES NOT SPEAK WELL EITHER FOR YOUR POWERS OF PERSUASION OR THE GOODWILL OF THE PROTAGONISTS. YOUR BASIC PLOY IS TO GET THE CONFERENCE STARTED ON A POSITIVE NOTE BEFORE THE YEAR'S END. SADAT MAY BE MORE FLEXIBLE THAN OTHER ARABS BUT THAT IS MAINLY TO SECURE BETTER ACCESS TO THE TRAPPED THIRD ARMY. THE SWISS PRESS IS REPORTEDLY CALLING THE POSTPONED CONFERENCE "THE PHANTOM CONFERENCE."

UN OFFICIALS CLAIM THAT THE DECEMBER 21 PEACE CONFERENCE DATE DOES NOT SOUND MUCH FIRMER THAN THE ORIGINAL DECEMBER 18 ONE. THERE HAS BEEN NO SOVIET COMMENT ON A CAIRO REPORT THAT AMBASSADOR VINOGRADOV WILL LEAD THE SOVIET DELEGATION AFTER GROMYKO'S DEPARTURE.

THE U.S. FILED ITS FIRST INDOCHINA PROTEST TO THE ICCS OVER THE KILLING OF AN UNARMED AMERICAN OFFICER LAST SATURDAY. CLYDE FARNSWORTH, WRITING ABOUT THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY, SAYS THERE ARE GROWING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND EUROPE WHICH YOU RECOGNIZED WITH YOUR PROPOSAL LAST WEEK FOR AN INTERNATIONAL ACTION GROUP ON ENERGY.

THE LEAD EDITORIAL POINTS OUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS AND SAYS THAT IF THE CONFERENCE GETS OFF TO A REASONABLE START, MUCH CREDIT WILL BE OWED TO YOUR TIRELESS EFFORTS.

MILTON VIORST WRITES THAT ALTHOUGH THE BRITISH HAVE DONE MUCH TO HELP THE ARABS, THEY HAVE GOTTEN NO REWARD FOR THEIR EFFORTS. HE BELIEVES ISRAEL IS ONLY A PAWN IN A MUCH BIGGER GAME, WHICH GOES BACK 600 YEARS WHEN THE ARABS RULED THE ENTIRE EAST AND CAME CLOSE TO OVERRUNNING THE WEST.

JOHN CREWDSON REPORTS THAT A NEW NATIONAL COMMISSION THAT WAS CREATED TO REVIEW FEDERAL AND STATE WIRETAPPING IS EXPECTED TO LOOK INTO THE ADMINISTRATION'S USE OF "SO-CALLED NATIONAL SECURITY WIRETAPS." A 15-MAN COMMISSION INCLUDES SENATORS MCCLELLAN, HRUSKA, ABOUREZK, AND TAFT.

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